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INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY Bulgaria
SUBJECT Details On Uranium Mines Near Bukhovo and
Seslavtsi

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1. The Uranium Mine near Bukhovo is 39 km from Sofia. It is located eight km northeast of Bukhovo. The mine consists of several shafts; one shaft is located above Bukhovo and 10 km from it. Over 25 shafts are located about four km from the village of Seslavtsi. sig. Several new shafts have been opened during 1953 north of Bukhovo. The mines are in the mountain terrain, which is covered with forests and, in certain places, with rock.

2. [REDACTED]
3. Soviets are in charge of the mines. The director of the mines is [REDACTED] a mining engineer by profession. The main cashier of the mine is also a Soviet citizen. Over a thousand Soviet specialists and instructors are working at the mine. They direct the work with the help of some Bulgarian engineers and specialists. It is difficult to find out the salary of the Soviets in Bulgaria - engineers and specialists - because their pay comes in sealed envelopes which are handed out to each personally.

4. It is impossible to give the exact number of workers in the mines because it is forbidden to go from one shaft to another. There are about 2,400 - 2,600 persons working in the shafts near Seslavtsi. It is estimated that the same number of workers are also working in the shafts above Bukhovo. All these workers live in housing near Bukhovo. The dwellings are located on both sides of the highway.
5. A certain number of trudovaks are constantly working in the shafts. They number about four thousand persons and live in barracks right at the mines. They are under strict discipline and the commanders of the companies and platoons are officers who are reliable Communists.
6. The mine defense is in the hands of the militia, assisted by a [REDACTED]

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company of soldiers. This company includes 75 troops. The main military post is located 500 m above Seslavtsi. Here the workers who go into and out of the mines are thoroughly examined. All workers have special cards which they have to show to the militia and to the troops when they go to work. Workers can only go to the shaft to which they are assigned and are not allowed to go to other shafts.

7. In front of the shaft above Seslavtsi there is a military post. In front of this post there are several towers where workers are examined. No ore can be taken out of the shafts and workers who take it out are severely punished. Troops and militiamen examine the workers' clothes very carefully. Once a little ore dust was found on one worker. He was immediately taken to the Soviets and imprisoned.
8. During 1949 five persons were caught in the vicinity of the shaft near Seslavtsi. They were trying to spy and to have workers take out ore for them. However, they were caught and all five were immediately shot.
9. The mined ore is loaded on mine cars which run on rails. The full mining cars run out of the mine from where the ore is shipped by means of a special channel to a particular building. In this building the ore is automatically loaded on trucks. From here the ore is taken to special factories for a rough processing and sorting.
10. The rough sorting of ore is done while the ore is being dug. The Soviets with special apparatus are in charge of this operation (sorting). These apparatus are put or pasted on the ore and one arrow indicates the quality of the ore. Immediately afterwards the digging for ore begins. The ore is divided into first, second, and third quality ore.
11. The first quality uranium ore is hardly processed. This ore is loaded at the Yana railroad station on special railroad cars and is shipped under heavy guard to Stalin Harbor. From here it goes to the USSR. The second and third quality ore is cleaned (processed) at the Yana railroad station, where there is a special factory. The third quality uranium ore goes through a factory for cleaning purposes. This factory is near the shaft.
12. The method of processing is almost unknown as it is a secret.
13. The place where the ore is loaded on railroad cars at the Yana railroad station is surrounded by a very high fence and is guarded /by troops/. Soviet-made machines for the primary processing of ore are located here /Yana/, while the other processing is done in the USSR.
14. The galleries which are 2.5 to three km long to five km long are in good condition. They are well equipped and well lighted. Ventilation in the galleries is satisfactory. New shafts are frequently opened and work starts immediately. The galleries are divided into so-called "adits". The shafts near Seslavtsi have over 30 such "adits". More than a brigade of workers can work in one of these "adits" at a time. This depends on how the ore is processed.
15. There are three eight-hour shifts. The mines are in operation 24 hours a day. One brigade consists of eight to nine workers. One brigade is able to fill in eight hours 28 - 30 mining cars with ore of the three qualities mentioned above. The percentage of the first and second quality ore is the largest. One adit is 1.80 m wide on top and 2.50 m wide on the bottom and each adit is connected to other adits by means of a cut (passage). These cuts are from 1.50 to 1.60 m wide and up to 1.80 m high. Some of the galleries and adits have incurred much water. Consequently workers work in them with rubber clothing.

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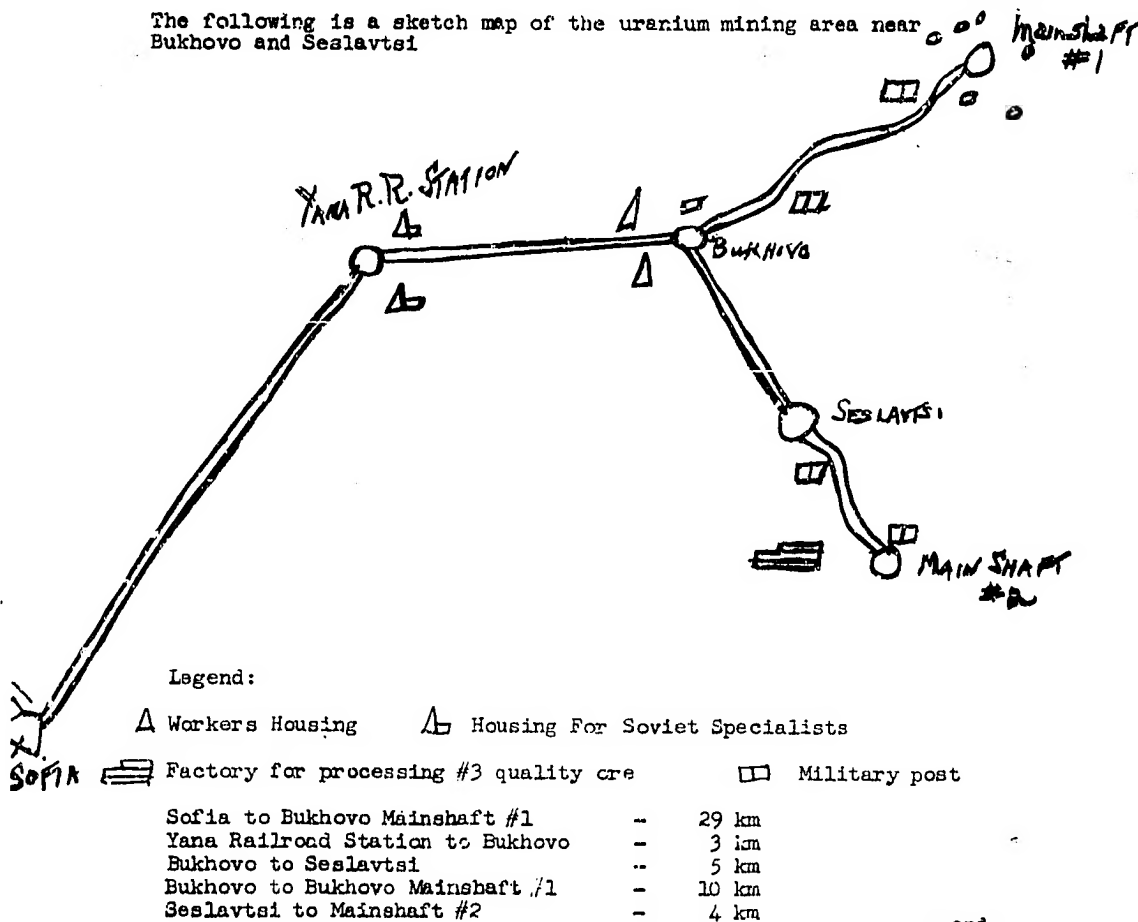
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16. The color of the ore varies. Some is yellow, some is brown, and some is white. The ore is not very hard and is dug in pieces. If a piece is too large it is crushed smaller. This is done in order to enable the ore to go through the channels which take it into the building where the trucks are located.
17. Working conditions in the mine are quite good. [However] there are many cases where workers lose their sight. The shafts are equipped with modern Soviet equipment. The ore is dug by means of pneumatic hammers. Each adit in the galleries has such a pneumatic hammer and one medium steam shovel.
18. Special commissions hire workers. Workers from the vicinity are preferred, because they are well known and thus are more reliable from a security point of view. They and their families are constantly threatened that they will be prosecuted if the worker runs away or emigrates. As soon as a worker starts working he receives a special card with which he can enter the mine for working purposes. Heavy and dangerous work is done by a special labor penal company, which consists of known anti-Communists. These workers are also controlled, but are kept away from confidential work in the shafts and in other sections in the mines.
19. During 1949 uranium ore was found near the village of Bachkovo, in Asenovgrad Okoliya. Soviet specialists are studying and exploiting this ore. Uranium ore was also found in the vicinity of the town of Kazanluk.

The following is a sketch map of the uranium mining area near Bukhovo and Seslavtsi



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